

# SMART MARKETING

## Why Country Singers Are So Good at Marketing

### THEY SELL HAPPINESS. ...OR AT LEAST HOPE

As I have said many times, great marketers offer happiness — or at least hope for happiness. That's true of country singers, too. They stir emotions. They sell with stories.

Surely you've noticed that many of those stories are sad. "He put the bottle to his head and pulled the trigger," sings Brad Paisley in "Whiskey Lullaby." Later, like Juliet and Romeo, she does the same. Ah, but look at the hope the song offered. The wronged lover could have put down the bottle of whiskey and forgiven the trespass and lived happily ever after. There was not happiness, but there was hope for happiness.



George Farris

### THEY KNOW THEIR CUSTOMERS

A couple years ago, I was in Las Vegas. The Country Music Awards were being nationally televised that same week. There were dozens of the top country singers in town. But the night before the CMA awards show, most of them came out to the House of Blues and sang for FREE to benefit a well-known nonprofit event dedicated to combating a deadly disease.

When the country stars walked in, they didn't have bodyguards or an entourage. Their clothes were not much more expensive than those the audience wore.

After they sang a few songs, most of the performers came over to the bar and had a beer with us fans. Toby Keith and Daryl Worley were the tallest singers I've ever seen, Kenny Chesney the shortest. All turned their

heads when pretty girls walked by. All talked about sports and working long hours — just like us ordinary schmucks.

### THEY HAVE A GOOD PRODUCT

First, of course, they have talent. But they know what we want to hear. When they stand around the bar they listen more than they talk. Then they write and sing about what matters to us.

### YOU SHOULD DO THE SAME

Maybe you can't be a country singer, but you can offer hope and happiness. You can stay in touch with your customers and prospects. You can learn what prospects want. And you can supply what they want.

### YOU DON'T HAVE TO SING — BUT YOU CAN SELL

Never stop promoting your product, give away a little (like the stars at the charity benefit), and use publicity to your advantage.

Make a list of these tasks. Then when you're done, follow the words of Toby Keith's song: "Start livin' — that's the next thing on my list."

Questions, comments?

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